Practitioner's Docket No. 20501.213RIS

PATENTS

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re: Reissue Patent Application for Original Patent Number 6,033,451
Original Patent Issue Date: 03/07/2000
First Names Inventor: William G. Fish

For: VACUUM CLEANER BAG DOCKING ASSEMBLY

Box Reissue
Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D. C. 20231

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Please enter this amendment in the above-referenced reissue patent application.

In the Claims

Please amend claim 9 and add claims 15 - 42 as follows:

9. (Amended) An upright vacuum cleaner comprising:

a handle assembly, at least a portion thereof comprising a dirty air conduit;

a vacuum bag;

a dirty air outlet nozzle mounted to the handle assembly, the nozzle communicating with the dirty air conduit and projecting from the dirty air conduit for engagement with the vacuum bag;

an anchor member having a central opening for closely, releasably receiving the nozzle, the anchor member being sufficiently deformable to permit the central opening to be engaged with or removed from the nozzle; and

a mounting member releasably connected to the anchor member and movable between a loading position in which the vacuum bag is inserted into or removed from the mounting member and a working position in which an opening in the vacuum bag engages the nozzle, the mounting member restricting deformation of the anchor member when connected thereto to restrict the anchor member from being removed from the nozzle.

15. A vacuum cleaner bag comprising:

an air-permeable bag having an opening; and

a collar attached to the bag surrounding the opening, the collar having an end edge, a first side edge, a second side edge opposing the first side edge, and an orientation surface,

wherein the first and second side edges are in a generally vertical orientation during use, the end edge is in a generally horizontal orientation during use, the first and second side edges are free from the bag, the orientation

surface comprises an angled surface extending from the first side edge to the end edge, and the orientation surface is adapted to orient the opening of the bag.

16. The vacuum cleaner bag of Claim 15, wherein the orientation surface comprises a chamfered corner of the collar.

17. The vacuum cleaner bag of Claim 15, wherein the collar includes a second orientation surface extending from the second side edge to the end edge.

18. The vacuum cleaner bag of Claim 15, wherein the collar further includes a retainer opening.

19. The vacuum cleaner bag of Claim 15, wherein the collar further includes a recess adjacent the end edge.

20. The vacuum cleaner bag of Claim 15, wherein the collar further includes an elastic seal surrounding the bag opening.

21. The vacuum cleaner bag of Claim 15, wherein the collar further includes a sliding panel that slides between an open position and a closed position over the bag opening.

22. The bag of Claim 21, wherein the collar further includes a positive stop limiting the movement of the sliding panel.

23. The vacuum cleaner bag of Claim 21, wherein the collar further includes a retainer opening.

24. A bag for receipt in a mounting member having a channel and a first orientation surface, the bag comprising:

an air-permeable bag having an opening; and

a collar attached to said bag surrounding said opening, said collar having an end edge, a first side edge, a second side edge opposing said first side edge, and a second orientation surface, said second orientation surface extending from said first side edge to said end edge, said second orientation surface being complementary to the first orientation surface of the mounting member,

wherein said second orientation surface is adapted to orient said opening of said bag upon contact with the first orientation surface of the mounting member.

25. The bag of claim 24, wherein said second orientation surface comprises a chamfered corner of said collar.

26. The bag of Claim 24, wherein said collar further includes a retainer opening for engagement with the mounting member.

27. The bag of Claim 24, wherein said collar further includes a recess adjacent said end edge for surrounding a retainer member of the mounting member.

28. The bag of Claim 24, wherein said collar includes a third orientation surface extending from said second side edge to said end edge.

29. The bag of Claim 24, wherein said collar further includes a sliding panel that slides between an open position and a closed position over the bag opening.

30. The bag of Claim 29, wherein said collar further includes a retainer opening for engaging the mounting member.

31. The bag of Claim 30, wherein said retainer opening is adapted to engage the mounting member such that a force necessary to move said sliding panel is less than a second force necessary to disengage the mounting member from said retainer opening of said collar.

32. The bag of Claim 29, wherein said collar further includes a positive stop limiting the movement of said sliding panel.

33. The bag of Claim 24, wherein said collar has a thickness less than the channel of the mounting member channel.

34. A vacuum cleaner bag comprising:

an air-permeable bag having an opening; and

a collar surrounding the bag opening, the collar having opposing side margins, an end margin, and corner portions between the end margin and the side margins, the opposing side margins being in a generally vertical orientation during use, and the end margin being in a generally horizontal orientation during use,

wherein at least one of the corner portions is at an angle with respect to the end margin and the adjacent side margin, and the opposing side margins are free from the bag.

35. A vacuum cleaner assembly comprising;

a dirty air outlet;

a vacuum bag having a substantially rigid collar surrounding a bag opening;

a bag docking assembly mounted adjacent the dirty air outlet, the bag docking assembly comprising:

an anchor member having a central opening for closely, releasably receiving the dirty air outlet, the anchor member being sufficiently deformable to permit the central opening to be engaged with or removed from the dirty air outlet, and

a mounting member releasably connected to the anchor member and movable between a loading position in which the vacuum bag is inserted into or removed from the mounting member and a working position in which an opening in the vacuum bag engages the dirty air outlet, the mounting member restricting deformation of the anchor member when connected thereto to restrict the anchor member from being removed from the dirty air outlet.

36. The assembly of claim 35 wherein the loading position is separate from the working position by an angle greater then 90 degrees.

37. The assembly of claim 35 wherein the mounting member is substantially planar, the anchor member is substantially planar, and the anchor member is constructed to have a shape complementary to the opening in the mounting member so that the assembly is substantially planar when in the working position.

38. The assembly of claim 37 further comprising a latch operable to releasably retain the assembly in the working position.

39. The assembly of claim 38 wherein the latch comprises a protrusion extending from the edge of the anchor member that engages the opening in the mounting member when the assembly is in the working position.

40. The assembly of claim 35 further comprising a retainer member attached to the mounting member for engaging the retainer opening in the vacuum bag.

41. The upright vacuum cleaner of claim 9 wherein the vacuum bag further comprises a collar having two opposing sides margins, an end margin, and corner portions between the end margin and the opposing side margins, and in which at least one corner portion is beveled at an angle to the end margin and the adjacent side margin.

42. The assembly of claim 35 wherein the substantially rigid collar further comprises opposing side margins, an end margin and corner portions between the end margin and the opposing side margins, at least one of the corner portions being at an angle with respect to the end margin and the adjacent side.

Remarks in Accordance with 37 CFR 1,173(c)

Claims 1-14 are pending and claims 15-42 have been added to the reissue application. Applicant respectfully request consideration of the application in view of the following remarks.

Claim 9 has been amended to include the additional limitation of the vacuum bag. Column 5, line 28 of the specification discloses an upright vacuum cleaner comprising a handle assembly 16, at least a portion thereof comprising a dirty air conduit 18; a vacuum bag 24; a dirty air outlet nozzle 20 mounted to the handle assembly, the nozzle communicating with the dirty air conduit and projecting from the dirty air conduit for engagement with the vacuum bag; an anchor member 36 having a central opening for closely, releasably receiving the dirty air outlet, the anchor member being sufficiently deformable to permit the central opening to be engaged with or removed from the dirty air outlet; and a mounting member 38 releasably connected to the anchor member and movable between a loading position in which the vacuum bag is inserted into or removed from the mounting member and a working position in which an opening in the vacuum bag engages the dirty air outlet, the mounting member restricting deformation of the anchor member when connected thereto to restrict the anchor member from being removed from the dirty air outlet.

Claim 15-34 are new claims directed to the bag used in the claimed docking assembly. Column 6, line 64 through column 7, line 3 and column 7 line 51 through column 8 line 21 describe a vacuum cleaner bag 24 comprising an air-permeable bag having an opening 26; and a collar 28 attached to the bag surrounding the opening, the collar having an end edge, a first side edge, a second side edge opposing the first side edge, and an orientation surface 64, wherein the first and second side edges are in a generally vertical orientation during use, the end edge is in a generally horizontal orientation during use, the first and second side edges are free from the bag, the orientation surface comprises an angled surface extending from the first side edge to the end edge, and the orientation surface is adapted to orient the opening of the bag.

Claims 35-40 and 42 are new claims directed to the bag used in conjunction with the docking assembly. Column 5, line 28 of the specification discloses a vacuum cleaner assembly comprising a dirty air outlet 20; a vacuum bag 24 having a substantially rigid collar 28 surrounding a bag opening 26; a bag docking assembly 10 mounted adjacent the dirty air outlet, the bag docking assembly comprising: an anchor member 36 having a central opening for closely, releasably receiving the dirty air outlet, the anchor member being sufficiently deformable to permit the central opening to be engaged with or removed from the dirty air outlet, and a mounting member 38 releasably connected to the anchor member and movable between a loading position in which the vacuum bag is inserted into or removed from the mounting member and a working position in which an opening in the vacuum bag engages the dirty air outlet, the mounting member restricting deformation of the anchor member when connected thereto to restrict the anchor member from being removed from the dirty air outlet.

Claim 41 depends from claim 9 and contains further limitations directed to the vacuum bag. Figures 8 and 9 discloses the upright vacuum cleaner of claim 9 wherein the vacuum bag 24 further comprises a collar 28 having two opposing sides margins, an end margin, and corner portions between the end margin and the opposing side margins, and in which at least one corner portion 64 is beveled at an angle to the end margin and the adjacent side margin.

CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing amendments, Applicant believes that existing claims 1-14 and additional claims 15-42 are in condition for allowance, and that action is respectfully requested. In accordance 37 CFR δ 1.121, attached hereto is a page entitled "Version with Markings to Show Changes Made" showing the specific changes made to the claims by the current amendment. If there are any remaining matters that can be handled in a telephone conference, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned attorney, Curtis J. Ollila, at (303) 546-1383.

Date: 2/27/02

Respectfully submitted,

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Version with Markings to Show Changes Made

In the Claims

Please amend claim 9 and add claims 15 - 42 as follows:

9. (Amended) An upright vacuum cleaner comprising:

a handle assembly, at least a portion thereof comprising a dirty air conduit;

a vacuum bag;

a dirty air outlet nozzle mounted to the handle assembly, the nozzle communicating with the dirty air conduit and projecting from the dirty air conduit for engagement with the vacuum bag;

an anchor member having a central opening for closely, releasably receiving the nozzle, the anchor member being sufficiently deformable to permit the central opening to be engaged with or removed from the nozzle; and

a mounting member releasably connected to the anchor member and movable between a loading position in which the vacuum bag is inserted into or removed from the mounting member and a working position in which an opening in the vacuum bag engages the nozzle, the mounting member restricting deformation of the anchor member when connected thereto to restrict the anchor member from being removed from the nozzle.

--15. A vacuum cleaner bag comprising:

an air-permeable bag having an opening; and

a collar attached to the bag surrounding the opening, the collar having an end edge, a first side edge, a second side edge opposing the first side edge, and an orientation surface,

wherein the first and second side edges are in a generally vertical orientation during use, the end edge is in a generally horizontal orientation during use, the first and second side edges are free from the bag, the orientation surface comprises an angled surface extending from the first side edge to the end edge, and the orientation surface is adapted to orient the opening of the bag.

16. The vacuum cleaner bag of Claim 15, wherein the orientation surface comprises a chamfered corner of the collar.

17. The vacuum cleaner bag of Claim 15, wherein the collar includes a second orientation surface extending from the second side edge to the end edge.

18. The vacuum cleaner bag of Claim 15, wherein the collar further includes a retainer opening.

19. The vacuum cleaner bag of Claim 15, wherein the collar further includes a recess adjacent the end edge.

20. The vacuum cleaner bag of Claim 15, wherein the collar further includes an elastic seal surrounding the bag opening.

21. The vacuum cleaner bag of Claim 15, wherein the collar further includes a sliding panel that slides between an open position and a closed position over the bag opening.

22. The bag of Claim 21, wherein the collar further includes a positive stop limiting the movement of the sliding panel.

23. The vacuum cleaner bag of Claim 21, wherein the collar further includes a retainer opening.

24. A bag for receipt in a mounting member having a channel and a first orientation surface, the bag comprising:

an air-permeable bag having an opening; and

a collar attached to said bag surrounding said opening, said collar having an end edge, a first side edge, a second side edge opposing said first side edge, and a second orientation surface, said second orientation surface extending from said first side edge to said end edge, said second orientation surface being complementary to the first orientation surface of the mounting member,

wherein said second orientation surface is adapted to orient said opening of said bag upon contact with the first orientation surface of the mounting member.

25. The bag of claim 24, wherein said second orientation surface comprises a chamfered corner of said collar.

26. The bag of Claim 24, wherein said collar further includes a retainer opening for engagement with the mounting member.

27. The bag of Claim 24, wherein said collar further includes a recess adjacent said end edge for surrounding a retainer member of the mounting member.

28. The bag of Claim 24, wherein said collar includes a third orientation surface extending from said second side edge to said end edge.

29. The bag of Claim 24, wherein said collar further includes a sliding panel that slides between an open position and a closed position over the bag opening.

30. The bag of Claim 29, wherein said collar further includes a retainer opening for engaging the mounting member.

31. The bag of Claim 30, wherein said retainer opening is adapted to engage the mounting member such that a force necessary to move said sliding panel is less than a second force necessary to disengage the mounting member from said retainer opening of said collar.

32. The bag of Claim 29, wherein said collar further includes a positive stop limiting the movement of said sliding panel.

33. The bag of Claim 24, wherein said collar has a thickness less than the channel of the mounting member channel.

34. A vacuum cleaner bag comprising:

an air-permeable bag having an opening; and

a collar surrounding the bag opening, the collar having opposing side margins, an end margin, and corner portions between the end margin and the side margins, the opposing side margins being in a generally vertical orientation during use, and the end margin being in a generally horizontal orientation during use,

wherein at least one of the corner portions is at an angle with respect to the end margin and the adjacent side margin, and the opposing side margins are free from the bag.

35. A vacuum cleaner assembly comprising;

a dirty air outlet;

a vacuum bag having a substantially rigid collar surrounding a bag opening;

a bag docking assembly mounted adjacent the dirty air outlet, the bag docking assembly comprising:

an anchor member having a central opening for closely, releasably receiving the dirty air outlet, the anchor member being sufficiently deformable to permit the central opening to be engaged with or removed from the dirty air outlet, and

a mounting member releasably connected to the anchor member and movable between a loading position in which the vacuum bag is inserted into or removed from the mounting member and a working position in which an opening in the vacuum bag engages the dirty air outlet, the mounting member restricting deformation of the anchor member when connected thereto to restrict the anchor member from being removed from the dirty air outlet.

36. The assembly of claim 35 wherein the loading position is separate from the working position by an angle greater then 90 degrees.

37. The assembly of claim 35 wherein the mounting member is substantially planar, the anchor member is substantially planar, and the anchor member is constructed to have a shape complementary to the opening in the mounting member so that the assembly is substantially planar when in the working position.

38. The assembly of claim 37 further comprising a latch operable to releasably retain the assembly in the working position.

39. The assembly of claim 38 wherein the latch comprises a protrusion extending from the edge of the anchor member that engages the opening in the mounting member when the assembly is in the working position.

40. The assembly of claim 35 further comprising a retainer member attached to the mounting member for engaging the retainer opening in the vacuum bag.

41. The upright vacuum cleaner of claim 9 wherein the vacuum bag further comprises a collar having two opposing sides margins, an end margin, and corner portions between the end margin and the opposing side margins, and in which at least one corner portion is beveled at an angle to the end margin and the adjacent side margin.

42. The assembly of claim 35 wherein the substantially rigid collar further comprises opposing side margins, an end margin and corner portions between the end margin and the opposing side margins, at least one of the corner portions being at an angle with respect to the end margin and the adjacent side.--